



CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Testimony before the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
February 27, 2014

Senator Cassano, Representative Willis, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Vijay Nair and I am president of the Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors (CSU-AAUP), which represents over 3,100 full-time and part-time faculty, librarians, coaches, and counselors at CSU.

Governor's Bill 30, *An Act Concerning the Board of Regents for Higher Education Infrastructure Act*, proposes to increase enrollments at the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities and prepare tomorrow's workforce. It includes a one-time revenue transfer of \$60 million to create a "President's Office Operating Fund" and proposes to increase capital funding by \$60 million for IT/smart classroom technology and the creation of a system-wide master plan. **We support this proposal, but caution that capital funds for the Connecticut State Universities, Community College System, and Charter Oak State College should remain distinct. All three systems are under the Board of Regents, but they have distinct missions and identities and the legislature should be able to channel funding to them accordingly.**

We also note that almost all of the planning and policy decisions made by the Board of Regents until now have been without any meaningful consultation with the faculty who are ultimately responsible for educating our students. These decisions are made in Committee whose members are far removed from the realities of the classroom. We believe that allowing faculty representation on the BOR and its Committees will benefit the Board, the institutions under it, and the public interest. There will be nothing to lose and much to gain.

SB 30 also proposes to change CSUS 2020 to CSCU 2020. We at CSU are thankful for the construction and renovations that have taken place on our campuses due to CSUS 2020. We hope that such necessary upgrading of the facilities of the four Connecticut State Universities will continue as was promised by CSUS 2020.

Governor's Bill 5050, *An Act Improving College Completions*, proposes to establish a Go Back to Get Ahead Program.

CSU-AAUP supports many of the goals of SB 30, HB 5050, and "Transform CSCU 2020." We support the efforts to keep tuition low and increase funding for the Governor's Scholarship Program for our current students who are struggling to be able to afford a university education. These proposals will help our current students to complete their degree programs. We support the concept of increasing enrollment at our institutions by recruiting students with some college credit to complete their degrees. However, such students who have been away from college for more than 18 months are likely to need additional support. Unfortunately, **Transform CSCU 2020 does not provide funding for additional faculty and**

other personnel to serve not only an increased student population, but a student population with increased needs.

Since 2003, the number of full-time faculty positions at CSU has remained relatively stable at around 1,400 while the number of part-time faculty has grown dramatically (from approximately 1250 part-time faculty in 2003 to nearly 1,750 in 2013). Adequate levels of full-time faculty are crucial to the functioning of the university. Having inadequate numbers of full-time faculty affect student retention, graduation rates, and workforce development. **CSU needs a significant investment from the state to hire full-time faculty as was the case with UConn and Next Generation Connecticut last year.**

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vijay Nair". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vijay" and last name "Nair" clearly distinguishable.